Cheat Sheet  
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Diseases in the Middle Ages

During the middle ages there were many diseases being spread. Some of these were:  
- The Plagues   
- Small Pox  
- Typhoid Fever  
- Leprosy  
- Evil Eye  
- Dysentery   
- Influenza

Evil Eye:   
It was believed that some people could cast evil spells on others through their eyes. The way of preventing this was to lift your left hand up in the air.

Dysentery:   
It was a disease that you could get from contaminated food and water and it physically weakened you.

Leprosy:  
An infection that you could get through air and contact. It leads to disfigurement of your body and eventually death.

Typhoid Fever:  
A disease transmitted through faeces. The mortality rate of this disease was 10-20%.

Middle Ages from 400AD – 1500AD

In the Middle ages Europe had lots of knowledge on medicine based from different beliefs and books of knowledge.

Some of the things that the people believed in were:   
- Ancient Prescriptions  
- Spiritual Magic and Charms  
- Prayers (religion)  
- Knowledge from books  
- Astrology/ Zodiac signs

Treatments of Diseases

In the Middle Ages there were some very absurd treatments that doctors would perform.

Warts:   
Treatment – Hold a living toad next to the skin to soften it.

Boils:  
Treatment – Cut a pigeon in half and rub it into the swollen area.

Fainting:   
Treatment - Burn feathers and inhale the smoke.

There were many different kinds of treatments, some of these included:  
- Herbs  
- Charms and spells   
- Prayer  
- Surgery (depending on your doctor)

Herbs that were used and what for:

Basil – Scorpion Bite  
Cabbage – Diarrea  
Chives – Cough  
Figs – Burns  
Ginger – Poisons  
Garlic – Cleaning   
Onion – Painkiller  
Willow Leaves – Painkiller

Doctor

Doctors gave many different treatments, some of these were urine checks, consulting astrological, checked lifestyle, checked pulse, letting blood by a barber and/or recommended prayers.

London

London city started to realize that their air was getting hazardous to their health and they made a law that says that you are not allowed to leave trash on the street or you’d be fined. Also butchers were not allowed to sell rotten or stinking meat.

The middle ages was a time when there were many diseases and treatments, however sometimes it was hard to find out whether it was the diseases or the treatments that killed more people. But the medicine knowledge did grow better with time and that’s what counts.

The Black Death

The Black Death was a combination of two plagues that killed many people during the middle ages. In fact, it killed 30-40% of the population in Europe. The two plagues that were going around were pneumonia and bubonic plague.

Doctors also believed that there were only 4 substances inside the body. These 4 were yellow bile, black bile, blood and phlegm.

* People often had their own animals, and these animals could carry diseases and plagues and when the animals then died, there would be a lack of food, clothes and there was a risk of the plague being spread from animals to animals or humans.

Life in the middle ages

* The diets of what people of the middle Ages ate were lacking vitamins, and because of this lack, they were very vulnerable to diseases.
* Because their living spaces were so small and clammy, they tended to get diseases from their living spaces.
* They worked all year-around and because of this they tended to get arthritis and rheumatism.
* There were often fights in the middle Ages. People would often get cuts and wounds, and they would often not be treated properly because they didn’t have the right medicine.

Dark Ages

The dark ages came from when many tribes were fighting against each other, after the Roman Empire declined. However, this led to the new civilization, The Muslims. They were a whole new civilization with much more access to knowledge. There was a university built for the purpose of the study of medicine. They translated many books from Arab, Africa, India and Greece. Also, in Baghdad in 931AD doctors had to pass an exam to get their doctors license.

Un-used knowledge

The Roman tribes had many books available for them with knowledge of how to make their diets and how to get fit. However, due to their inability to read, they could not use these sources.

Surgery

There were many types of surgery, three examples are:

- Bloodletting which is when they cut opens your vein to let out the bad blood.

- Trepanning which was when they would drill a hole in your head to let out the evil spirit that was supposedly inside.

- Cauterization which was when they would try to thicken your blood and break your tissue by either freezing it or burning it.

Prayers

People would be given prayers to say by a member of the church and this led them to believe that God would release them from their pain.

Charms and Spells

Some people believed that charms and spells assigned by a witch doctor would heal them. They would wear different charms or even chant.